

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.





Letter No. 2381

September 22, 1988

U.S. EXPORT  
SALES

U.S. exports of corn, grain sorghum and soybeans for 1987/88 exceed the sales of the previous year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. corn exports for 1987/88 marketing year total 43.846 million tons, 12 percent above last year's total and 5 percent above the five-year average. Grain sorghum exports totaled 5.632 million tons, 13 percent above last year, but 1 percent below the five-year average. Soybean exports totaled 21.740 million tons, an increase of 4 percent over the previous year and 3 percent over the five-year average. For the 1988/89 marketing year, export sales for corn are up 50 percent and sorghum are double 1987/88. Other commodity totals trail last year.

EC ACTIVE  
IN EXPORTS

The European Community is actively pursuing a near record grain export level, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The EC authorized 912,000 tons of free market wheat exports - not intervention stocks - with a maximum subsidy of about \$64 per ton. This brings free market wheat authorizations to 2.3 million tons so far in 1988/89, compared to less than 200,000 tons issued at this time last year when the EC emphasized intervention sales and free market sales were inhibited by a smaller crop of poor quality. EC traders also reportedly sold 1.5 million tons of wheat and 1 million tons of barley to the USSR in response to the EC Commission's offer of an additional \$5.50 subsidy on sales to the USSR.

DROUGHT SLOWS  
FARMLAND VALUES

The drought appears to have slowed temporarily the rise in farmland values. Farm appraisers surveyed in August by the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported only a 1.2 percent increase in nationwide farmland values for May-July, lower than the 1.8 percent gain reported for the preceding 3 months. The appraisers expect a 4.6 percent rise in value for the year ahead.

NO MAJOR  
LIQUIDATION OF  
LIVESTOCK

U.S. livestock producers are adjusting gradually to the effects of the drought without major liquidations or production cuts, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cash receipts for livestock in 1988 will be slightly above last year's \$76.2 billion, but with higher feed costs, incomes will be lower. Beef production will be down in the fourth quarter, but pork up. Somewhat lower 1989 livestock output likely will lead to higher prices next year.

U.S. FARM PRICES UP 14%	Although U.S. crop yields have been hurt by the drought, foreign production of major crops is generally up from last year. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, lower stocks and reduced output sent U.S. farm prices for crops up 14 percent in the third quarter from the second. Higher world prices mean smaller U.S. exports in 1988/89 and a decline in the U.S. share of the world market.
A FARM PROFILE	The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers this profile of a farm. The average U.S. farm at the end of 1985 operated 709 acres and had production expenses of about \$74,000...assets of \$325,000...capital investments of \$10,000...gross cash farm income of \$82,000...and debts equal to 22.5 percent of total assets.
\$20.4 BILLION IN LOANS	The Commodity Credit Corporation had \$20.4 billion invested in commodity loans and inventories on June 30, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Loans outstanding totaled \$12.2 billion and inventories \$8.2 billion. A year earlier, the Commodity Credit Corporation had a total investment of \$31.4 billion, including \$16.6 billion in loans outstanding and inventories of \$14.8 billion.
NO COMMERCIAL LICENSE	The U.S. Department of Transportation is allowing states to exempt drivers of farm vehicles from certain testing and licensing requirements of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, along with a number of farm groups and organizations, had filed requests for a waiver for drivers of farm vehicles.
CONSERVATION RESERVE	The U.S. Department of Agriculture has received bids to place 3,434,646 acres in the Conservation Reserve Program during the seventh sign-up period which ran through Aug. 31. The acceptance of these bids will be announced around Dec. 15.
U.S. CORN TO YUGOSLAVIA/	Yugoslavia, normally an exporter of more than one million tons of corn to East Europe and the USSR, may have to import corn for the second straight year due to a drought-reduced crop and hoarding of available supplies by local farmers. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Yugoslav farmers are opting to hold domestic corn and barter for goods, rather than sell to the government because high inflation rates make holding money undesirable. Yugoslavia has traditionally turned to the U.S. as a corn supplier in years of crop shortfalls.
DESTROY THEIR FOOD & HOMES	Destroy their food and protective winter homes, and pesticide use can decrease as much as 80 percent. That's the new advice from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on getting rid of boll weevils. A study in the Rio Grande Valley showed that if farmers destroy harvested cotton plants, the boll weevils lose their food source, also a place to reproduce during fall and winter and protection when they are in their dormant stage.

CATFISH Catfish raised on the farm and processed during August totaled 26.9 million pounds round weight, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is up 10 percent from August 1987. The August average price paid to growers was 80 cents per pound, 20 cents above the same month last year. The August average prices received by processors for whole fish were \$1.79 per pound for ice pack and \$1.86 for frozen fish.

TOBACCO U.S. tobacco production is up about 10 percent from 1987, due to increased acreage and higher yields, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Yields are up because the growing conditions were favorable for flue-cured tobacco and better than last year for some other kinds. Despite lower stocks, the larger crop and prospects for a continuing decline in U.S. cigarette consumption have kept flue-cured auction prices slightly below a year earlier. However, cash receipts from the 1988 flue-cured crop may surpass last year's level.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE AGRICULTURE USA #1634...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) The word, RATS, usually creates images of wild, dangerous animals hunting for food in dark alleys...and although that image is correct in many cases, scientists say humans have benefited tremendously from rat research. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, George Holmes talks to USDA Research Scientist Dr. Otho Michaelis about the special role rats play in solving many of the diseases threatening mankind.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1622...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; CRP sign-up; Calf program; Soviet bonus system; Farm stress.

CONSUMER TIME #1114...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Big bad wool; Dry cured bacon; Coping with crisis; Kids in charge; Promoting beef.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Mon, Sept. 26, World ag outlook; Tues, Sept. 27, Weekly crop and weather; Potato production; Thurs, Sept. 29, Ag prices; Fri, Sept. 30, Grain stocks, Hog and pig report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D  
ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 10D  
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D  
REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D  
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.



OFFMIKE

Too much rain is hitting sections of North Dakota. Lyle Romine (American Agriculture Network, Fargo, ND) says farmers are having difficulty harvesting crops. Frustrating after having so much dryness. Maybe its the other side of the coin.

Serving the entire community was an opportunity brought to Charlie Rankin (KURV, Edinburg, TX) by hurricane Gilbert. Local TV station and cable system lost their power. Charlie's station has its own generator and provided information that helped to save lives and property during the storm's tornados and flooding. He says little damage reported to crops in his area, the rain was beneficial -- leaching salt, recharging water levels, helping grow grass -- agriculture is not out of business in south Texas.

Gardening and Landscaping are two items that always get high response when discussed in feature programs, and planting a tree in someone's honor can serve as a focus for the information. In many regions this is the right time for tree planting.

Farm Broadcasters Letter  
Radio and Television, Rm. 410A  
Office of Information, OGPA  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
Penalty for Private Use \$300

Nelson Robinson (USDA Ag Update - retired) called the other day to say he was keeping himself busy -- landscaping. Tis the time. New Farm Bill speculation is already underway, likely to be an interesting story late this year and a major item early next year. Current Farm Bill expires in 1990. Early comments range from extending the present one to writing a new bill. 65th Outlook Conference will be held November 29 to December 1 at USDA's Jefferson Auditorium in Washington, D.C. Topics include farm policy in the next Administration, effect of drought on farm outlook, trade issues, marketing to expand demand, farm credit and others. For a program and registration packet call (202) 447-3050, or write to Outlook '89, Room 5143-S, U.S. Dept. of Agric., Washington, D.C. 20250.



VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio and Television Division